

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Roberto Remigio Benigni, was born October 27 1952 in Manciano, Castiglion Fiorentino, Italy, the son of Isolina Papini, a fabric inspector, and Remigio Benigni, a bricklayer, carpenter, and farmer. His acting began at 20 years old in a theater in Prato. He moved to Rome in the same year to participate in more theater experiences, both as an actor and director. After that, he found fame in Italy for a controversial TV show *Roberti*.

In 1976 he had his first film role in *Belinguer I Love You*. He directed his first film *You Upset Me* in 1983, during which he met his wife Nicoletta Braschi. Benigni became famous in Italy in the 1970s for a shocking TV series called *Onda Libera*, on RAI2, by Renzo Arbore, in which he interpreted the satirical piece "anthem of the melt body" (*L'inno del corpo sciolto*, a hymn to defecation). A great scandal for the time, the series was suspended due to censorship.

His first film was 1977's *Berlinguer ti voglio bene*, also by Giuseppe Bertolucci. In 1993, he starred in *Son of the Pink Panther*, directed by veteran Blake Edwards. There, he played Peter Sellers' Inspector Clouseau's illegitimate son who is assigned to save the Princess of Lugash. The film

bombed in the US, but was a hit in Italy, his home country. Benigni is probably best known outside Italy for his 1997 tragicomedy *Life Is Beautiful* (*La vita è bella*), filmed in Arezzo, also written by Cerami.

The film is about an Italian Jewish man who tries to protect his son's innocence during his internment at a Nazi concentration camp, by telling him that the Holocaust is an elaborate game and he must adhere very carefully to the rules to win. Benigni's father had spent two years in a concentration camp in Bergen-Belsen, and *La vita e bella* is based in part on his father's experiences. At the 71st Academy Awards, Benigni won the Academy Award for Best Actor and the film won both the Academy Award for Best Original Dramatic Score and the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

Although the story and presentation of the film had been discussed during production with different Jewish groups to limit the offense it might cause, the film was attacked by many critics who accused it of presenting the Holocaust without much suffering, and some who considered that "laughing at everything" was not remotely appropriate, let alone credible.

In 2003, Benigni was honored by the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF), receiving the Foundation's NIAF Special Achievement Award in Entertainment. Benigni's latest film is *La tigre e la neve* (*The Tiger and the Snow*, 2005), a love story set during the initial stage of the Iraq War. *Life is Beautiful* is romantic comedy and tragedy of reality. Released on Italy 20 December 1997, in duration 116. Guido Orefice (Roberto Benigni), a

young Italian Jew, arrives in Arezzo where he plans to set up a bookstore, taking a job in the interim as a waiter. He lives with his uncle Eliseo. Guido is both funny and charismatic, especially when he romances Dora (Italian, but not Jewish, and portrayed by Benigni's actual wife Nicoletta Braschi), whom he steals at her engagement from her rude and loud fiancé. Several years pass in which Guido and Dora have a son, Joshua (Giorgio Cantarini). In the film, Joshua is around four and a half years old, however an older Joshua narrates both the beginning and ending of the film. When Guido, Uncle Eliseo and Joshua are taken to a NAZI camp on Joshua's birthday. Dora demands to join her family and is permitted to do so.

When Dora boards the train she is the only one wearing red, as everyone else is wearing dark colored clothes. Guido hides Joshua from the Nazi guards and sneaks him food. Uncle Eliseo is gassed to death, though the others do not know. In an attempt to keep up Joshua's spirits, Guido convinces Joshua that the camp is just a game, in which the first person to get 1,000 points wins a tank. He tells Joshua that if he cries, complains that he wants his mother or complains that he is hungry, he will lose points, while quiet boys who hide from the camp guards earn 1,000 points.

To further prove that the camp is a game he pretends to translate the guard's instructions. Guido convinces Joshua that the camp guards are mean because they want the tank for themselves and that all the other children are hiding in order to win the game. He puts off every attempt of Joshua ending

the game and returning home by convincing him that they are in the lead for the tank. Despite being surrounded by rampant death and people and all their sicknesses, Joshua does not question this fiction because of his father's convincing performance and his own innocence. Guido maintains this story right until the end, when in the chaos caused by the American advance he tells his son to stay in a sweatbox until everybody has left, this being the final test before the tank is his.

After trying to find Dora, Guido is caught, taken away and shot by a Nazi guard, but not before making his son laugh one last time by imitating the Nazi guard as if the two of them are marching around the camp together. Joshua manages to survive and thinks he has won the game when an American tank arrives to liberate the camp. He is reunited with his mother, not knowing that his father has died. Years later, he realizes the sacrifice his father made for him gave him the chance to live.

At least, there are four reasons why the researcher chooses *Life is Beautiful* movie. First, this film has interesting major character that is Guido Orefice (Roberto Benigni). Guido is not only a smart, funny and creative person but he is also a very adaptable man. It is easily for him to make adaptation to the new environment. Everything that he does always make the people around him smiles. He has so many unique ways to make everybody around him feel happy and comfort. A lot of people like him because his unique characteristics. He has his own perspective to see the whole thing in

this world especially life problems. He always faces the problems in his life within wide smile on his lips. He never shows it toward people especially to the people that he loves like his family.

Second, this movie wins many awards and gets some nominations from the 71st Academy Awards. Benigni won the Academy Award for Best Actor and the film won both the Academy Award for Best Original Dramatic Score and the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Although the story and presentation of the film had been discussed during production with different Jewish groups to limit the offense it might cause, the film was attacked by many critics who accused it of presenting the Holocaust without much suffering, and some who considered that "laughing at everything" was not remotely appropriate, let alone credible. It shows that this movie exactly has an interesting thing that makes a society love it and give a high appreciation to this movie.

Third, the writer has interest to the setting of this movie especially for its setting of place. The places or locations which are used inside this movie really describe old time and represented all of the events as if on the year where the true events happen. It brings the viewers as if going back to the old time that is in a year 1939 until 1945. The early scenes are so beautifully stylized that when the setting shifts to the stark, oppressive camp, audience share the characters' dread.

Fourth, *Life is Beautiful* also gives the several moral messages that want to be delivered through this movie, like how really unique ways used by a person to make the people around him feel happy and comfort are. There are some people who see their life problem in humor or not serious way because they think that this life too much worth to fill with the tears or another sadness. Through this movie the writer also can see about how great love and sacrifice of father to his family. Inside this movie also there is a faithfulness of a wife to her husband and lie is not always bad things to do because sometimes in the reality that lies can save someone's life.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested to observe what motives underlying the struggle of Guido Orifice hidden the reality of his son. Furthermore, the researcher entitles this research **GUIDO'S SACRIFICE IN *LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL* BY ROBERTO BENIGNI (1997): A HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH.**

B. Literature Review

Life is Beautiful is an interesting movie, it contains of defense mechanism that can be analyzed through Humanistic Approach. The researcher is inspired to conduct a research after reading the research paper that written by two students of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

The first researcher is Siti Khodijah (2009). She conducts her research entitled "Defense Mechanism of Guido Orefice in Roberto Benigni's *Life is*

Beautiful Movie: a Psychological Approach”. In her research, she finds character’s personality and the ego of the problem really makes Guido as a father feel hurt, stressed, anxiety and becoming demented revenge.

The second researcher is Fitri Meyliana (2010). She conducts her research entitled “Coping Behavior of Guido Orefice in Roberto Benigni’s *Life is Beautiful* (1997): Individual Psychological Perspective”. She finds the unique ways of Guido to solve his life problem, which can make people around him, feel happy and comfort.

The different from the previous researchers is the approach using Humanistic theory that will be analyzed. And the similarity is the movie of *Life is Beautiful*.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the title and the background of the study, the writer formulates the problem as follows, “What are the motives underlying the sacrifice of Guido Oreface?”

D. Limitation of the Study

The writer will focus on analyzing the motives underlying the sacrifice of Guido Oreface as the major character in the film *Life is Beautiful* based on the humanistic psychological approach.

E. Objective of the Study

Based on the problem stated above, the writer proposes the objectives of the study as follows:

1. To analyze the structural elements of the film.
2. To identify the motives underlying the struggle based on the humanistic psychological approach.

F. The Benefits of the Study

The study is expected to give benefit as follows:

1. To give some contribution on understanding of the film *Life is Beautiful* especially by a humanistic approach.
2. To improve the researcher's understanding and competence in applying a humanistic psychological approach to literature.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

The type of this study is qualitative study in the form of library.

2. Object of the study

The researcher takes *Life is Beautiful* film as the object of the study. The movie is directed by Roberto Benigni released in 20 Desember 1997 Italy.

3. Data Source

The researcher here uses qualitative. This is a library research, which takes the source of the data from words and other writing. The writer divides the data source into two categories:

a. Primary Data Source

The primary data is taken from *Life is Beautiful* film and the movie script downloaded from http://www.script-orama.com/movie_scripts/l/life-is-beautiful-script-transcript.html.

b. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data source is taken from other sources, which are related to the primary data such as biography of the director, some books of humanistic, website about the film and another data related to this research.

4. Method of Collecting Data

The technique used in collecting data is the research utilizes the library research. The method used in this research is library research. The first step is watching the film while reading the script, then finding out the important data and arranging data into several parts based on its classification and finally developing the data that are provided related to the problem statement which has been chosen.

5. Technique of Data Analysis

The writer uses Humanistic psychological and applies it by using the descriptive analysis. The researcher identifies the motivation of sacrifice by Guido Orefice as a major character in *Life is Beautiful* movie.

H. Research Paper Organization

This research consists of five chapters. Chapter one is introduction. This chapter involves the Background of the Study, Literature Review, Problem Statement, Limitation of the Study, Objective of the Study, Research Method, and Research Paper Organization. Chapter two is Underlying Theory. It deals with the Notion of Humanistic Psychological, Major Principle of Humanistic Psychology, Structural Elements of the movie, and Theoretical Application. Chapter three is Structural Analysis. In this chapter, the researcher explains the Structural Elements, which included Narrative Elements and Technical Elements. Chapter four is dealing with the Analysis using the Humanistic Psychological Approach. And the last chapter is Conclusion and Suggestion.